

SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS

Please amend the Specification as follows:

**Pages 4 and 5, bridging paragraphs:**

An embodiment that is simple and durable has been found to be a structure in which the retaining profiles of the long narrow sides are in the form of complementary positively engaging profiles, wherein the positively engaging profile of one panel forms a common hinge with the complementary positively engaging profile of a second panel in the laid condition and the hinge is to be assembled by a rotary joining movement of the panels. By virtue of that pivotability between the long narrow sides, that connecting location between the panels is protected from severe material damage and breakage of the retaining profiles.

**Page 6, third paragraph:**

In order to take up laid panels again, desirably firstly a row of panels disposed in mutually juxtaposed relationship are lifted in such a way that they rotate inclinedly upwardly in the hinge. The projections are then pulled in an inclined direction out of the openings and the hinge is taken apart. The panels are then only joined at

the short narrow sides. It is recommended that the interengaged hook elements of the short narrow sides should be pulled apart in their longitudinal extent, in order in that way in the disconnection procedure to avoid deformation of the hook elements, such as to cause material fatigue.

**Page 9, fourth paragraph:**

Figure 12 shows part of a fastening system with panels as shown in Figure 6 in the laid condition of two panels with a filler between the positively engaging profiles of the long narrow sides, and

**Page 11, first paragraph:**

A second embodiment of a fastening system 2 denoted 2' is shown in Figure 3. Therein the same technical features are denoted by the same reference as in Figure 2. The embodiment of Figure 3 differs from the embodiment of Figure 2 in that one of the two leg/hook projection pairs that bears one against the other and that has an air gap or clearance have changed. The fundamental function of the fastening system 2 still remains and 2' are the same.

Pages 12 and 13, bridging paragraph:

Figure 5 shows an alternative embodiment of a fastening system with particular complementary retaining profiles 20 and 21 at the short narrow sides of panels 22 and 23. Once again, the arrangement has hook elements 24 and 25 that, like the foregoing embodiments, have legs 26 and 27 as well as hook projections 28 and 29. The embodiment of Figure 5 is so constructed that the end 30 of the hook element at the underside of the second panel 23 has at its free end a projecting detent element 31 that engages into a recess 32 of undercut configuration in the hook element 24 at the top side of the first panel 22. The hook elements 24 and 25 can be latched one into the other by a slight pressure and with elastic deformation. The panels 22 and 23 are arrested perpendicularly to the plane of laying thereof by the detent element 31, which engages into the recess 32. The action for arresting the panels 22 and 23 to prevent them from being pulled apart in the longitudinal direction thereof is afforded by retaining surfaces 33 and 34 that are provided on the hook projections 28 and 29 of the hook elements 24 and 25.

**Pages 13 and 14, bridging paragraph:**

Figure 6 illustrates a fastening system for rectangular panels 40 and 41. At their long narrow sides, the panels 40 and 41 have retaining profiles in the form of positively engaging profiles 42 and 43. The mutually opposite positively engaging profiles 42 and 43 of a panel 40 and 41 respectively are complementary to each other. In that way, it is possible to fit to each panel that has already been laid a further panel.

**Page 17, first paragraph:**

The latter kind of joint is preferably used for the short narrow sides of the panels 40 and 41 when they are provided with the same complementary positively engaging profiles 42 and 43 as the long narrow sides of the panels 40 and 41.